

REMARKS

This paper submits the amendments identified above, and is further responsive in any other manner indicated below.

PENDING CLAIMS

Original Claims 1-12 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer of any scope or subject matter, and new Claims 13-30 are presented herein for consideration and examination in this application in order to adjust a clarity and/or focus of Applicant's claimed invention. That is, such claims are unrelated to any prior art or scope adjustment, and are simply clarified claims in which Applicant is presently interested. At entry of this paper, Claims 13-30 are pending for further consideration and examination in the application.

CLAIMS FOR PRIORITY UNDER §§119 AND 120

Applicant claims domestic benefit under 35 USC §120 of prior US Application No. 09/366,642 filed 4 August 1999.

Applicant claims priority of JP 10-265951 filed 21 September 1998 and JP 10-220095 filed 4 August 1998 under 35 USC §119. The certified copies of the priority documents were filed in Application No. 09/366,642, upon which priority is claimed under §120.

Written acknowledgment of the above claims for priority is respectfully requested.

ASSIGNEE OF ENTIRE INTEREST

HITACHI, LTD. is Assignee of entire right, title and interest in and to the present continuation application by virtue of the Assignment filed in prior Application No. 09/366,642 and recorded 21 September 1999 at Reel 010,246, Frames 0961 *et seq.*

RESERVATION OF RIGHTS

It is respectfully submitted that any and all claim amendments and/or cancellations submitted within this paper and throughout prosecution of the present application are without prejudice or disclaimer of any scope or subject matter. Further, Applicant respectfully reserves all rights to file subsequent related application(s) (including reissue applications) directed to any/all previously claimed limitations/features which have been subsequently amended or cancelled, or to any/all limitations/features not yet claimed, *i.e.*, Applicant continues (indefinitely) to maintain no intention or desire to dedicate or surrender any limitations/features of subject matter of the present application to the public.

EXAMINER INVITED TO TELEPHONE

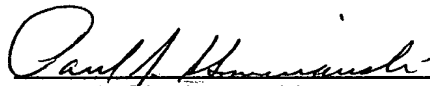
The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the local D.C. area number 703-312-6600, to discuss an Examiner's Amendment or other suggested action for accelerating prosecution and moving the present application to allowance.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims presently pending in the application are now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, early allowance of such claims is respectfully requested.

This Preliminary Amendment is being filed concurrently with the present application, and is therefore timely for entry and consideration. No Petition or additional fees are required or possible. To whatever other extent is actually appropriate and necessary, please charge any fees properly required in connection with the filing of this paper to Deposit Account No. 01-2135 (referencing case No. 501.37387CX1).

Respectfully submitted,



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